
GEORGIA PRESS RELEASE



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GEORGIA'S WHEAT YIELD UP

The July 1 crop report shows the State's **wheat** yield was up from the June 1 forecast, according to the Georgia Agricultural Statistics Service. Based on a sample of growers contacted on or about July 1, wheat averaged 46 bushels per acre, up 3 bushels from the June 1 forecast. The crop was much better than earlier anticipated. The increased yield was due to good harvesting weather and high test weights. Acreage harvested for grain is estimated at 200,000 acres, 30,000 acres below last year. Production now is expected to total 9.20 million bushels, 13 percent less than 2003. Harvest was virtually complete by the end of June.

The July 1 survey indicated Georgia's 2004 **tobacco** yield will be below last year's yield. This initial forecast puts Georgia's average yield at 2,050 pounds per acre, 150 pounds less than in 2003. Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus has been a major problem and in some areas wet conditions have hurt the crop. At the end of June the crop was considered in mostly fair condition. Acres are down this year, with harvested acreage expected to total 24,000 acres, down 11 percent or 3,000 acres from 2003. If these projections are realized, production will amount to 49.2 million pounds, 17 percent less than in 2003.

The second forecast for Georgia's 2004 **peach** production is up. Improved soil moisture during June has increased the prospects of Georgia peaches. Production is now expected to total 110 million pounds, up 10 million from the June forecast, and the same as the 2003 crop. Harvest progressed slowly during the month of June because of the wet weather. The crop was considered in mostly good condition. By the end of June, 40 percent of the expected production had been harvested, slightly less than normal.

U.S. HIGHLIGHTS

WINTER WHEAT PRODUCTION DOWN 4 PERCENT FROM JUNE FORECAST

Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.47 billion bushels. This is down 4 percent from last month and 14 percent below 2003. The U.S. yield is forecast at 42.2 bushels per acre, down 1.4 bushels from last month.

Hard Red Winter, at 838 million bushels, is down 5 percent from a month ago. White Winter is up 1 percent from last month and now totals 248 million bushels. Soft Red Winter, at 383 million bushels, is down 3 percent from the last forecast.

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Tobacco: U.S. all flue-cured production is forecast at 518 million pounds, up 14 percent from the 2003 crop and 1 percent above 2002. Yield per acre for flue-cured is forecast at 2,244 pounds, up 287 pounds from 2003 and 150 pounds above the 2002 yield. Forecasted yields for all flue-cured tobacco in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia increased from last year, while yields are expected to decline in Georgia.

North Carolina's flue-cured tobacco production is forecast at 346 million pounds, up 18 percent from the 2003 crop. Yield per acre is forecast at 2,263 pounds, up 361 pounds from 2003. Most growers in North Carolina had no difficulty getting their crop in the ground. However, most areas needed additional rainfall after planting. Conditions varied even within counties, depending upon localized rainfall. As of June 27, the crop was rated 78 percent good to excellent. Flue-cured tobacco production in South Carolina is forecast at 59.4 million pounds, down 6 percent from the 2003 crop. Yield per acre is forecast at 2,200 pounds, up 100 pounds from last year. Growth and development of the crop were nearly on schedule with topping slightly ahead of its normal rate.

Peaches: The July 2004 forecast of U.S. peach production is 2.61 billion pounds, up 4 percent from 2003 and 3 percent above two years ago. Fourteen States forecast increases in production from last year, while 11 States expect declines and 4 States remain unchanged. The California Clingstone crop is forecast at 1.15 billion pounds, unchanged from the June 1 forecast but 7 percent above 2003. California experienced an adequate number of chilling hours benefitting the Clingstone crop. Overall, bloom is reported to be good on all varieties. Picking began in the Kingsburg area on June 9, ten days earlier than last year's starting date. Harvest gained momentum throughout June in Stanislaus, Yuba, and Sutter counties with Ceres Carson and Loadel the major varieties picked. Quality is reported to be very good. The California Freestone crop is forecast at 780 million pounds, down 2 percent from the June 1 forecast and 6 percent below 2003. The Freestone bloom was late but, with a warm dry spring, the crop matured rapidly. Some middle to late season varieties had problems with incomplete pollination causing the fruit to stop growing too soon. Harvest was approximately 40 percent complete by July 1. Flavor is reported to be excellent. The South Carolina peach crop is forecast at 140 million pounds, unchanged from the June 1 forecast but up 40 percent from last year. Weather conditions have been favorable for fruit development. Moisture was short in the spring but adequate for bloom. Precipitation was well above normal for the month of June, slowing harvest. North Carolina's peach crop, forecast at 9.00 million pounds, is up 50 percent from last year but 10 percent below two years ago. Growing conditions have been more favorable than last year's conditions when spring frost damage reduced the crop.